

**AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY**  
**2011 SCORING GUIDELINES (Form B)**

**Question 2**

**Describe the challenges to royal authority in eastern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and evaluate the effectiveness of those challenges.**

**9–8 points**

- Thesis either identifies at least two challenges that applied to eastern Europe in general OR identifies one challenge and connects it explicitly to at least two eastern European states.
- Essay may discuss external (international) challenges as well as internal challenges.
- Organization is clear and supports the argument.
- Discussion addresses at least two eastern European countries.
- Essay is well balanced in its discussion of identified challenges to royal authority.
- All major assertions are supported by multiple pieces of relevant evidence.
- Essay may contain some minor errors that do not detract from the argument.

**7–6 points**

- Thesis either identifies at least two challenges that applied to eastern Europe in general OR identifies one challenge and connects it explicitly to at least two Eastern European states.
- Essay may discuss external (international) challenges as well as internal challenges.
- Organization is clear and supports the argument.
- Discussion addresses at least two eastern European countries, though it may be unbalanced.
- Essay may emphasize one country more than the other or may emphasize one challenge more than the other.
- All major assertions are supported by several pieces of relevant evidence.
- Essay may contain some errors that do not detract from the argument.

**5–4 points**

- Thesis addresses a challenge or challenges in a general context OR generalizes about eastern Europe without focusing on challenges to royal authority.
- Organization is unbalanced or ineffective.
- Discussion focuses either on one challenge or on one eastern European state.
- Essay tends to look at accomplishments of monarchs rather than challenges to monarchs.
- Essay contains more than one piece of historical evidence.
- Essay may contain minor errors.

**3–2 points**

- Thesis statement is missing or merely restates the prompt.
- Organization is unclear and ineffective.
- Essay is often off task and irrelevant.
- Essay shows serious imbalance.
- There is limited supporting evidence.
- Essay may contain several errors that detract from the argument.

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**Question 2 (continued)**

**1–0 points**

- Thesis is missing.
- Essay is poorly organized.
- Essay is off task or not responsive to the prompt.
- There is little or no supporting evidence.
- Essay has major errors.

In 17th and 18th centuries, many European countries, notably France and Russia, began to initiate absolutism and the royal authority of many European states was able to consolidate its power to control other social classes within the society. In eastern Europe, the rulers particularly suppressed social classes below their positions and attempted to maintain stability and peace within their states. Yet, there were some challenges attempted against these Eastern European rulers. In Eastern Europe, especially in Russia and Prussia, there were challenges against the authority to improve or upset the traditional class structure, but most challenges proved to be futile.

In Russia, as absolutist power grew, rulers such as Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible, attempted to create an obedient class of nobility while suppressing the middle class and peasants, who were suffering especially due to the system of serfdom. In early 1600s, the time period known as the Time of Troubles, the Cossacks, led by Stenka Razin, were angry at the royal authority that failed to improve their social status or situation. As a result, this group of people led a rebellion that attempted to signal the need for change and ~~the~~ possible violence and mobility of the lower classes. However, this rebellion was quickly put down by the royal army and no changes or improvements were made to the status of peasants and serfs. During the reign of Catherine the Great, there was another rebellion, the Pugachev rebellion, in the hope of save serfs from the dire social situation they were put under while the nobles did not suffer under the

royal authority. Although this rebellion seemed like it could have succeeded due to the growth of Enlightenment ideas among the absolutist rulers. However, the Pugachev rebellion failed to challenge the royal authority, as it was repressed by the army of Catherine the Great. As a result of this challenge, the empress quickly passed the charter that guaranteed the privileges of the nobility while the situation for peasants / serfs was sustained, or perhaps worsened due to increased power of lords over the serfs.

In Prussia, the absolute rulers also attempted to strengthen ~~is~~ their power at the expense of other social classes as they centralized their authority and demonstrated the power of absolute leaders. Similar to Russian nobles, the Junkers, the original class of nobility, were forced to put under the service for the ruler. All nobles had to relinquish their former possessions of land; they had to serve the ruler in the army or the office to ~~ex~~ receive lands from the ruler. It was under Frederick William I when the nobles resisted and challenged the royal authority. Junkers consolidated as power and attempted to gain power over the ruler in the power struggle, as they feared their inferior status in the absolute state. However, this challenge toward royal authority of the Sargeant King was immediately repressed. Frederick William I, although he did not put nobles under horrible social situation, demonstrated his power over nobles by creating a centralized bureaucracy called the Directory General. By creating this bureaucratic organization,

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2A-3

Frederick William I cut the number of officials and ensured the loyalty of officials, while he also tried to enforce his supervision of the corruption and inefficiency in serving the ruler. Therefore, he was able to re-inforce his royal authority over other social classes.

In 17th and 18th centuries, as absolute states formed, there were inevitable challenges toward the consolidation of the royal authority. Within Russia, <sup>these were</sup> ~~this was~~ demonstrated through the serf's rebellion against the royal authority while in Prussia, nobles tried to deprive Frederick William I of his absolute power. However, these attempts all failed to create a threat to the authority as the royal authority simply crushed these attempts and confirmed its power within the state.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century there was a threat to royal authority. Religion played a large part in this threat. Many Eastern European nations were threatened by one another. ~~Threat to~~ The threat to kingly authority came from religious tensions, Foreign Policy, and internal dissention.

Religion was a strong factor in ~~mon~~ approval. ~~Rulers were ex~~ Because of ~~the pen~~ In the 1600s, many new sects of Christianity had been created. Monarchs were often faced by religious tensions which threatened their rule. Uprisings by religious minorities played a large role in the decline of ~~was~~ a monarch's power. In Bohemia, for example, a catholic ruler Ferdinand was installed over a primarily calvinist population. This greatly challenged Ferdinand's power as it caused the population to ~~depose~~ depose him and elect another person, Fredrick as their ruler. This was highly nominal and Ferdinand was easily able to overthrow Fredrick, but Ferdinand spent his reign fighting for control of an area that was rightfully his. If Ferdinand had been calvinist, there would have

been no opposition to his rule. Instead, his appointment as king over a Calvinist land lead to demise in his power. This shows the great role played by his reign was consumed in the 30 yrs war, in which he constantly felt his power as an absolute ruler threatened. This shows the great role played by religion in political affairs. A move that sparks religious tensions places great challenge on the ruler and greatly challenges his power.

ROYAL Power of a monarch also relied heavily on another monarch's foreign policy. In Eastern Europe, there were two dominant kingdoms during this time Austria and Prussia. Both threatened the other often. The power of the monarchs in both country was based on the monarch's ability to keep the other at bay, which is why before his death, Charles created the Pragmatic sanction to ensure that his daughter received the throne. Immediately after his death

however, Prussia took Silesia from Austria. Charles's daughter ~~is~~, Maria Theresa, was wife and waited to strike back. Eventually she did, and she started the 7yrs war. While she did not win this war, it still helped her maintain her power. A monarch's power was measured in their land, if Maria had stood idly by as Prussia took her land she would have seen her power diminish. The 7yrs war shows how ~~dan~~ foreign policy dictates the power of a monarch.

Many monarchs also faced internal dissension. Ideas of freedom were being circulated around Europe. People like Locke expressed that monarchs should work for the good of their people. Many of the educated eastern Europeans used these enlightened thoughts to question monarchical power. These ideas lead to the eventual revolution under arbitrary leaders. However, while no monarch was overthrown in this era, these ideas did pose a threat to their absolutism. These monarchs



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2B-4

were forced to watch how they used  
their power. In places like England  
would have served as examples to people  
who would like to overthrow their eastern  
European government. Therefore, monarchs  
had to be careful about how they used  
their power, and people like Maria  
Theresa made reforms that would  
benefit their population.

Monarchs in Eastern Europe  
felt threatened by religious minorities  
other monarchs, and internal dissent.

Throughout the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, ideologies such as liberalism ~~and~~ influenced but left the nations of E. Europe relatively unaffected. Enlightenment ideas such as equality and separation of power took hold in W. Europe, eventually leading to the French Revolution in 1789, but left nations such as Prussia and Russia unscathed by its revolutionary potential. In these, the most powerful of the Eastern European nations, power resided with the monarch.

The best examples of how these policies lacked influence in eastern Europe would be the enlightened ~~monarch~~ despots Frederick William II and Catherine the Great. ~~These~~ These rulers espoused the writings of philosophes of Voltaire. These "enlightened" monarchs did implement some very moderate reforms, but in the end they held on to their power as if there were no tomorrow. For example, Catherine the Great was slowly going to lessen the duties of the Serfs and liberalize her empire until a Cossack rebellion ~~made~~ ~~in~~ during the 1700's made her realize that liberal reform was too volatile a concept to consider.

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2C-2

In the monarchs eyes, any type of liberal reform would restrict their power. Just like how reformation era Popes would not hold a council because it too ~~as~~ would result in the limitation of their power. The 18<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment and its ideologies posed a threat to the authority of eastern European rulers, but ultimately left it unaltered because these rulers had an iron grip on their subject that they would never allow to lessen.

**AP<sup>®</sup> EUROPEAN HISTORY**  
**2011 SCORING COMMENTARY (Form B)**

**Question 2**

**Sample: 2A**  
**Score: 9**

The essay has a well-crafted thesis that addresses two countries (Prussia and Russia), as well as one major challenge (the traditional class structure). It focuses on domestic challenges to both the Prussian and the Russian monarchy and shows a sophisticated understanding of these challenges. The argument is supported by multiple pieces of specific evidence. There are no major errors that detract from the overall argument. The essay earned the maximum score of 9 because of its insightful analysis and sophisticated grasp of the course content targeted by the question.

**Sample: 2B**  
**Score: 5**

The essay's thesis is embedded in the introduction and addresses three types of challenges to royal authority: religious tensions, foreign threats and internal dissent. The essay is unbalanced, with the challenges to royal authority in Habsburg Austria being the primary focus. Prussia and the challenges to the Prussian monarchy are mentioned only in passing. The evidence for Austria is specific and relatively strong, but evidence for Prussia is lacking. The discussion of Enlightenment political philosophy and its impact in eastern Europe is unfocused and lacks specifics. The essay's lack of balance prevented it from earning a score of 6, but it merited higher than a score of 4 because the coverage of Austria is solid, with challenges to Habsburg authority clearly identified and supported by evidence.

**Sample: 2C**  
**Score: 2**

The essay's attempted thesis is confused — it does refer to Enlightenment ideas, but it appears to suggest that monarchs in eastern Europe faced few if any challenges overall. The body paragraphs are likewise dismissive of the idea that royal authority in eastern Europe was challenged in any meaningful way during this period (except for one valid reference to Pugachev's Rebellion in Russia). Individual monarchs are noted in passing, with little development or explanation. The writing is vague, general and simplistic. There are several interpretive mistakes and factual errors. The essay earned better than a score of 1 because of its brief mention of Frederick William II and Catherine the Great and some reference to events during their reigns, but it did not earn a score of 3 because of the overall lack of specificity and apparent lack of understanding of the question.